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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT — Friday, September 30, 1938.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CABBAGE COUSINS". Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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"The time has come," the walrus said, "to feast on many things, On Brussels sprouts, and broccoli, and cauliflower, and -----."

I can't think of a single word to fit into the place occupied by royalty. Perhaps it's just as well.

Anyway, the walrus was right, it is time to feast on cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage, and kale. All these cousins of the cabbage are at their best in the fall, beginning about this time of the year. I can say this with confidence because I've just been reading a report from the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

It seems there'll be almost a record crop of cabbage in the country this year. And plenty of other members of the cabbage family. So, if you enjoy a steaming hot bunch of bright green, lacy, broccoli flowers, dripping with golden melted butter, or covered with a blanket of Hollandaise sauce, now is the time to indulge. All the other cabbage cousins taste just that good too, if they're treated right.

The dietitians rate the green members of the cabbage family highest. The greener a leafy vegetable is the more vitamin A, calcium, and iron it is likely to contain.

The leaves of the broccoli are one of the very richest vegetable sources of vitamin A. The flowers have large quantities of the vitamin and even the stems of broccoli have more vitamin A than most vegetables. Kale and the green kinds of chinese cabbage also furnish much vitamin.A. Which is a good tip for a family that has to economize on food. Often a family like that doesn't get all the vitamin A they really need.

Incidentally, if you're watching calories, you'll be glad to know that you don't have to be the least bit worried about any member of the cabbage family. Brussels sprouts are the only ones with more than 100 calories to the pound, as you buy them at the store. And even in a pound of Brussels sprouts there are only about 200 calories.

And here are some hints to the shopper:

"When buying cauliflower, select heads that are clean and white, firm, and compact, and heavy for their size. Heads should be smooth, rather than ragged or

'ricy' in appearance. They should not show any brown color or traces of decay. Outside leaves should be fresh, green, and firm.

"The best broccoli heads are large, 3 inches or more in diameter, compact, green, and not overmature. They should be at least five inches long from top to bottom.

"Brussels sprouts are best if their outer leaves have a delicate green color and are fresh and firm. They should not show traces of worms or plant lice. The outer leaves of the Chinese cabbage should be fresh and crisp.

"Kale and kohlrabi should be picked while they are still very young and tender. Many home gardeners make the mistake of giving these vegetables too much time to grow, so they are tough before they are cooked.

"If you are planning to serve 5 or 6 people, buy one medium-sized head of cauliflower, a quart of Brussels sprouts, or a large bunch of broccoli. Six medium-sized kohlrabi, weighing about 1-1/2 pound, or 2 or 3 pounds of kale also will be enough for 5 or 6 servings."

And there are more hints for the cook, too. (I'm still quoting from the Bureau of Home Economics release.)

"It is especially important to avoid overcooking any member of the cabbage family. They develop a strong taste, disagreeable odor, and an unattractive color if they are not removed from the fire just as soon as they are tender.

"Green cabbage cousins will keep their color better if you cover them with rapidly boiling salted water, leave the cover off, and cook for the shortest time possible. Avoid adding soda. Although soda might improve the color, it's sure to destroy some of the vitamin C, and give the vegetable a slimy surface.

"You can keep white cauliflower whiter, if you add of pinch of cream of tartar to the cooking water. But who objects to cauliflower with a creamy yellow tinge? Red cabbage will turn an ugly blue purple unless you cook it with very tart apples. Or a generous dash of vinegar or lemon juice at serving time will bring back the original 'red'.

"And now if you want to cook broccoli stems tender, without cooking the fragile flowers to pieces, here's a suggestion. First, pare off the tough outside covering, if the stems are very large. Next slice the stems lengthwise, leaving a tuft of green flowers at the top of each slice.

"Kale is best if the midrib and stringy portions are discarded and the leaves chopped into small pieces before cooking. Kale, like green cabbage, is delicious 'panned' or cooked in a skillet with hot fat, but no water. Cover the skillet, and let the kale steam slowly 15 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle with flour and add a little cream or milk before serving."

Most homemakers know a dozen good ways to serve cauliflower cooked. But one I like best is to use it raw in fresh green vegetable salad. Then not a bit of the vitamin C goes to waste. Break the cauliflower into very small flowerets and allow them to stand in a cold place to crisp up a bit before mixing the salad.

They're very good to look at as well as eat if served on a relish tray with raw carrot sticks and green and ripe olives.

And whatever else you do to Brussels sprouts, please don't overcook them. It's really pitiful to see these pretty, delicate green, miniature cabbage heads cooked until they're an ugly brown color and strong enough to vote. Sprouts should be cooked in boiling, salted water until barely tender--- probably never longer than 20 minutes.

If you're looking for an especially festive dish, serve Brussels sprouts combined with large, cooked chestnuts and seasoned with browned butter.

That's all the talk about cabbages and things for today.

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